

breaks to be temporarily extended. Instead of using the issue to score political points, let's come together and find a way to extend these tax breaks for 2 years and revisit the issue when the economy is on better footing. It is the least we can do to provide economic stability in an otherwise unstable time. We need to work for America for a change, not for party labels. You can't tell me that all Republicans are right and all Democrats are wrong. We need to come together as Americans and stabilize our economy for the long-term benefit of our country as a whole.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. JONES addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. WOOLSEY addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

TRAGEDY IN SAN BRUNO, CALIFORNIA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. SPEIER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. SPEIER. Mr. Speaker, on Thursday September 9, 2010, at a few minutes before 6:30, life changed forever in San Bruno, California. The first view from my district office led one of my staffers to believe a plane had crashed in the hills. After all, San Francisco International is in my district and airline jets fly over nearby San Francisco International Airport routinely passing over San Bruno every day.

The flames shot up over 100 feet in the air. But after 15 minutes, the flames didn't subside. It was as if a giant torch had been placed on what is normally a verdant hillside.

This was a distant view of the PG&E natural gas pipeline explosion. Closer up, the scene was horrific. Four confirmed dead. Scores of people hospitalized with second- and third-degree burns, some over 50 percent of their bodies. And 6 days after this tragedy, three people are still missing. Thirty-seven homes were completely destroyed—nothing but concrete pads left, or a weeping chimney, indicating what once had been. Twelve homes were standing shells and another 10 were damaged.

We are at day six. The smoke has cleared. The ash has settled. And one thing is really very clear: the community of San Bruno rose together. Mayor Jim Ruane, City Manager Connie Jackson, Police Chief Neil Telford and Fire Chief Dennis Haag all showed extraordinary leadership and courage in bring-

ing this community together and securing the flames within a box so that more homes were not destroyed and more lives destroyed as a result.

But on other fronts, questions remain—in fact they are multiplying—about the causes of this immense pain and suffering that has been visited upon San Bruno and surrounding areas. But no question—I repeat no question—has been more penetrating to me than asked by Sue Bullis a day after the explosion. I walked into the center that was set up to establish relief and support for the families and sitting at a table by herself looking distant was this woman. She looked at me and said she couldn't locate her mother-in-law, she couldn't locate her husband, she couldn't locate her son. Six days later, they still have not been found.

The explosion was so hot that glass windshields on cars melted. Bones have been found. The blast epicenter functioned as a crematorium. And through it all, hour after hour, Sue Bullis, who lived at 1690 Claremont, is hoping and praying for an answer. She lost her house. All her documents. She has nothing but hope. And now that hope will have to be converted to inner strength if she is to go on.

I will help Sue get her documents, her insurance payments from PG&E, and I will try to ease her pain just as thousands of others are helping to ease the pain caused by this explosion. But nothing is going to relieve the pain that she has coping with the loss of three of her family members.

On Friday, we will bury Jacqueline and Janessa Grieg. Ironically, Jacqueline Grieg worked at the California Public Utilities Commission in the gas pipeline area. Her daughter Janessa was an eighth grader at St. Cecilia School in San Francisco. She was also the student body president of that grammar school. On Saturday, we will bury Jessica Morales, the fiancée of a young man who is now in intensive care with 50 percent of his body burned. Jessica was just coming into her own, finding her way, finding work and employment and opportunities at school. We have just found out that Elizabeth Torres, an 81-year-old mother who has two family members still in the burn unit, has passed away, and she too will be remembered as well.

People are anxious to return to their homes, to retrieve those belongings that remain. Some may want to rebuild. A few may not. We face months and months of hard work, but at this moment, this very moment, I bow my head in silence for the family of Sue Bullis, Jacqueline Grieg, Janessa Grieg, Jessica Morales, and Elizabeth Torres.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. GOHMERT addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

SHATAVIA ANDERSON—MURDER VICTIM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. POE of Texas. In early August, August 7 to be exact, in Houston, Texas, right after the sun had gone down, about 9 o'clock p.m. on a hot summer night, a young girl was walking home. Shatavia Anderson. She went by Ta. And she was walking down the street not far from where she lived in a very modest community; 14-year-old, happy, spirited child.

She was confronted by two individuals who ambushed her, who taunted her, who robbed her, and as she tried to get away, one of them shot her in the back and murdered her not far from where she lived. This is who Ta was. This is her in the pink. She is next to her mother, Keisha Lambert. She's a real person, Mr. Speaker, a real victim of criminal conduct, died in the early teenage years. Ta's father, Leroy Anderson, said that his beautiful daughter loved life. And you can tell by looking at her that she is a happy, spirited child.

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It could have been any of our children.

Over the years in my career as a judge in the courthouse in Houston, Texas—22 to be exact—I've seen a lot of criminal cases, tried a lot, came across many victims, but this case has bothered me a great deal. I don't know the reason, maybe it's because I have four children—three of them are girls—eight grandkids—five of them are girls, but this one has bothered me a lot just by looking at who this young lady was. Ambushed by two individuals that were caught by the Houston Police Department, Melvin Alvarado, he was the cowardly shooter who shot her in the back. It is not his first experience with the criminal justice system in business Texas. He likes to drink and drive. It turns out, of course, like some others, he was illegally in the United States. He had been deported twice before to his native country of El Salvador, but that didn't make any difference to him. He came back to Houston and committed this crime and robbed this precious child of not only some money, but he stole her life when he came back and shot her in the back not far from where she lived.

There was another individual, Jonathan Lopez-Torres, the getaway driver of the car as they snuck away in the darkness of the night after murdering this beautiful child; he's from Honduras, although he was legally in the United States. He had been arrested for auto theft. The Houston Police Department said when these criminals were arrested they showed no remorse, no sadness, almost arrogant in the crime that they committed here in the United States. Melvin Alvarado confessed to this crime and told the police what he had done.